servants dominant but are privately class (number). In other States the Council has been widened by the addition to it of village headmen (*ai-dawi*), or the chief superintendents (*bamoor*) of the village markets, tolls from which constitute the chief item in the public receipts of those States. A further step towards the recognition of the public will in the nomination of a Siem has been the introduction of popular elections, at which all the adult males vote. Such popular elections were very greatly due to the views held by Colonel Rivet, who was Deputy-Commissioner of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills from 1861 to 1877. These elections have been, in many States, an innovation which is hardly in accord with public sentiment, and in many cases the voters have done no more than confirm the selection of a special electoral body. It is, however, clear that the idea of popular elections is not one with which the people are unfamiliar, *e.g.* in Langrin State, where all the adult males customarily vote at an election of a Siem. Popular election has also been customary in the Nobosohpoh and Mylliem States, in cases where a special electoral body has been unable to agree upon a nomination, and also in Nongspung, if a Council of five *lyngdohs*, which has in this State authority to declare who is the rightful heir, but not to disqualify him, cannot come to an unanimous decision. The Siems are appointed by an assembly, or *durbar*, which will be described later. The chiefs, having been thus chosen by the *durbar*, which is supposed by the people to be an institution of Divine origin, are styled, *ki Siem u Blei*, or Siems of God. In most States the Siem is the religious as well as the secular head, *e.g.* in the Cherra State, where the Siem is also *lyngdoh*. In Khyrim State the Siem has sacerdotal duties to perform at different religious ceremonies, especially at the time of the annual Nongkrem dance. It is the custom for the Siem to consult the augurs with the entrails for the good of the State. The Siem in matters judicial acts as a judge, the whole body of the *durbar* being the jury. In olden days the Siem marched to war at the head of his army. It is not customary to recognise an heir-apparent, and the young sons of the Siem hardly pursue the ordinary avocations of a Khasi, not comparing themselves in the least like sons of royalty. In quite

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1:Gordon E-4, 9 (no date) 1907 AR? Khasi AR?

642 occurring in the Nonsiej, three *lyngdohs* and two *sordars* assemble and decide who is to be Siem. They then summon the sirdars of villages to meet them in *darbar* and obtain the approval of the latter to their nomination. If the sirdars do not approve, the combined *darbar* then decides who is to become Siem. In Nongpyng there is a tradition that two sisters, Ka
643 644 *Sah* and Ka *Sem*, came to the village of Nongpyng, which was then ruled by two *lyngdohs*, and that the latter, having ascertained that the two sisters were of royal birth, married them. They then travelled to other villages and obtained the consent of the *lyngdohs* of these villages to the formation of all their villages into a State of which Nongpyng became the capital, and over which U Sngi Shadong, the son of Ka *Sem*, was appointed Siem by the five principal *lyngdohs*. After some generations the lyngdoh of Mairang with his villages became subject to the Siem of Nonglhlaw, an event which finds mention in the annals of the Nonglhlaw State as the conquest of the territory of the "Black" Siem of Nongpyng. Another lyngdoh was appointed in place of the one whose territory had been thus annexed.

642 In the Mawiong State the ancient custom was that six houses
[643] appointed the Siem subject to the approval of the people of the
644 Nonsiej. In the Nobosohpoh State there are two Siem families, the "Black" and the "White," from either of which it has apparently been the custom for the people to select a Siem, as they wished. In Mawryngan the electors of the Siem are the heads of the four principal clans in the State. On a recent occasion, the electors being equally divided regarding the appointment of a Siem, it was necessary to appeal to the people of the State. In Langrin there are, as in Mahoram and Nobosohpoh, two main branches of the Siem family, i.e. the "Black" and the "White" Siems. Here there is no special electoral body; all the adults of the state have the right to vote at the election of a Siem. In Bhawal State Siems are appointed by the heads of eight clans whose decision is apparently final, provided that it is unanimous. In Malai-Sohmat a bare majority of the heads of six clans would be sufficient for the election of a Siem. Presumably both in Bhawal and Malai-Sohmat, if the electors were equally divided, there would be an appeal to the people.